

begin the adoption process since we spent so much on the failed attempt.

AFTER JEFFREY'S RETURN TO HIS MOTHER

We have been told that after this mess happened, Scott Johnson was called before tribal authorities and told to change his ways concerning his representation of the tribe's position on adoption. This is born out by his behavior. During the time we had Jeffrey in our home, Mr. Johnson called our home and talked to Kathy. He told her we were still the best place for Jeffrey to be and he still would continue to fight for that to happen. He had not, at that time, changed his opinion at all.

After his meeting with tribal authorities, we are told that he now says that he never promised us that the tribe would consider us as an adoptive placement for the child and that the tribe would follow placement guidelines as it always does, without exception. Obviously, his letter is clear on this point.

Both of us, during separate conversations with Mr. Johnson, expressed our concern over him personally and the possible negative impact he may suffer for his bold and appropriate position for the best interests of this child. He apparently has changed his position.

Two days after the article about the failed adoption was in the May 28, 1995 Tulsa World, Shelly S. Crow, Second Chief of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation called Rick at the office and wanted to meet. Within a week after that, Ms. Crow showed up at the courthouse and met with him. She informed Rick that she was very disturbed by the article and wanted to know what she could do to make everything right. She said something like what happened to us should never happen and that the tribe was concerned about Indian children. She also said that sometimes the best thing for Indian children was to be placed outside an Indian family, "as in your case."

Ms. Crow informed me that she was contacted by the paternal grandmother and told of the circumstances. She proceeded to write letters to put a stop to the adoption and insisted that the tribe intervene just as it eventually did. I asked her if she was aware that Mr. Johnson had approved our home when she decided to intervene and she said she did not know that nor had she seen the letter. She was also surprised to learn that the paternal grandmother had seven other grandchildren living with her on a permanent basis and that all were being supported by state and tribal assistance in substandard housing. She acted without even considering the best interests of Jeffrey.

Since Ms. Crow felt so guilty about her actions, she was very free with even more information. She went on to tell me that after Mr. Johnson changed his "official" position, he got promoted to a better/easier job with an extra \$3,000 a year salary increase. She believed that Mr. Johnson had been reprimanded at least four times in recent years by the tribe for various infractions while employed by the tribe.

Her last comment about Mr. Johnson was that his father worked somewhere in the federal government, possibly for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Because of this, and the fact that if the tribe did anything to Mr. Johnson the federal government may cut funding, Ms. Crow thought the tribe would put up with him no matter what he did wrong.

CONCLUSION

The Creek Nation should not be allowed to ruin so many innocent children by their selfish, destructive conduct. Not only have they shattered our lives, after encouraging us to go forward with this adoption, but they have sentenced Jeffrey to live a life in an environ-

ment where he was not wanted and could not be provided for adequately—They have not only destroyed our lives, but, more importantly, Jeffrey's.

In addition, because we committed all of our resources to this adoption, only after getting the approval by the tribe, we were effectively prevented from attempting to adopt again for some time.

The Creek Nation should suffer for the pain they have caused.

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION

Ockmulgee, OK, December 29, 1994.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNER,

*Newton and O'Conner Law Firm,
Tulsa, OK.*

DEAR MR. O'CONNER. A homestudy was conducted on the home of Richard Randal and Kathy Jean Clarke for the purpose of placing the unborn child of Ms. Shanon Boar whose spouse and father of the said child is an enrolled member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. The home was found to be of extraordinary quality. Mr. and Mrs. Clarke are people of integrity with high morals and quality values. Seldom have I met a couple with such character and desire to be good parents. Rarely do I have the opportunity to enthusiastically recommend a home for placement without reservation. In this instance however, I am delighted to approve this home for placement.

As a duly appointed Officer of the Court and representative of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Division of Children and Family Services we accept the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clarke as suitable placement for the unborn child of Ms. Shanon Bear. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation declines to intervene in the adoptive placement of said child to the Clarke family. However, if an alternate placement is made, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation reserves the right to intervene at a later time.

SCOTT A. JOHNSON,

Division Manager.

BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT FOR TOM WELCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MEEHAN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I have come to the floor this evening to ask for the Nation's help. A long time family friend of mine, Tom Welch, who lives in the town of Chelmsford, MA, is in serious need of a bone marrow transplant. Tom is a community activist, who tirelessly works to help others. He is employed by Hewlett Packard and he also serves as a town selectman—a position to which he was recently elected. He has a wife, Maureen, and two sons—a family to which he is absolutely committed.

Well-read and smart; a lover of jazz music, Tom is—to all who know him—an all around great guy. That is why it is with great sadness that I make this plea tonight.

In January of this year, Tom was diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Disorder, a condition which inhibits reproduction of the body's blood cells and destroys its ability to combat infection. Tom's condition is the result of long-term exposure to several forms of radiation therapy as, over the years, he has battled Hodgekin's Disease, Mela-

noma, and Basil-Cell Carcinoma. While his cancer is in remission, his life is now threatened by this immuno-deficient condition, and the last hope for a cure is to perform a bone marrow transplant. Such a procedure would replace his damaged bone marrow with another person's, much healthier marrow, restoring his body's blood-cell production and adding years onto his life. Since Tom is in good health, the procedure should be successful; the real obstacle is finding an acceptable donor match.

Each year over 9,000 Americans are diagnosed with Tom's condition. Unfortunately, less than 30 percent of those in need ever receive a bone marrow transplant. Matching potential donors is an extremely difficult process. Currently, two agencies in the United States are coordinating the effort: The American Bone Marrow Donor Registry, and the National Marrow Donor Program. Worldwide, over 3 million potential donors have been cataloged, but the demand for transplants still outnumbers the known supply.

Today, in my district, the friends of Tom Welch are holding a donor drive in an attempt to find a match for Tom, and this where I need America's help. I want to first encourage all Americans to contact their local donor registry to be listed as a potential donor. I also want to urge for help with the tremendous financial burden involved with such a drive. Take Tom's case for example, the cost to catalog each potential donor is approximately \$50. One can easily see that such a drive quickly becomes very expensive.

So tonight I am asking, on behalf of Tom Welch and all other patients in need of a bone marrow transplant, for help. Behind me is the address and phone number of the friends of Tom Welch. I urge everyone to call and pledge your support.

In closing, I want Tom and Maureen to know that they are in my prayers and in the prayers of people across the nation. With the help of the entire Nation, donors will be found for Tom and all others in need.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would request that Members address the Chair and not the television audience.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BURTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

URGING HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP TO DROP CONTROVERSIAL PROVISIONS IN PROPOSED HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM MEASURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, as health insurance reform goes to conference between the House and the Senate, I want to stress again tonight in the 5 minutes that I have that the Republican leadership needs to drop controversial provisions that I think are likely to scuttle this very important health insurance reform. Of course, the most important aspect of this, the most controversial provision, the one that I think really needs to be dropped, is what we call medical savings accounts; the tax breaks, if you will, for the wealthy and the healthy.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Senate passed the Kennedy-Kassebaum health insurance reform bill unanimously, 100 to zero. But the Senate bill, unlike the House bill, does not include these divisive provisions that doom the chances of this very important health insurance reform from becoming law.

The so-called medical savings accounts are essentially tax-free savings accounts from which participants could pay for everything but catastrophic health care costs. The problem with these accounts is that they would be a good deal, again, only for the healthiest and wealthiest people in our health care system, those who do not have high health care costs on a regular basis.

But health insurance costs would then increase for the average American, because essentially when we talk about health insurance, it all involves a health insurance risk pool which has all kinds of people in it. If we take out all the healthiest and the wealthiest people, we are essentially leaving in the pool the people that are the highest risk, that need the most attention or health care, so we destroy the whole basis for the health insurance pool and drive up the costs, essentially, for those who are left after those have been taken out of the pool.

Mr. Speaker, some people have asked me, why is this happening? Why is Speaker GINGRICH, why is the Republican Presidential candidate, talking and so insistent about including the medical savings accounts? Basically, it is a financial windfall for the Golden Rule Insurance Co., whose top executive has given Republican political committees over \$1 million in contributions in the last 4 years.

What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is let us forget about the political contributions. Let us forget about Golden Rule Insurance Co. Let us do what is right for the average American.

Mr. Speaker, again, I wanted to point out that medical savings accounts are designed to accompany the purchase of very high-deductible catastrophic in-

surance policies. They offer a myriad of tax breaks for those who can afford to save up money to pay the vastly increased out-of-pocket costs caused by an out-of-reach deductible.

I think that three questions have to be asked. Every American basically should ask the Republican leadership or every Republican lawmaker three questions with regard to these medical savings accounts: First of all, who wins if they are incorporated in this insurance reform; who loses; and why the Republican leadership insists on continuing to push for the medical savings accounts.

Who wins? The answer is simple. The wealthy win. They are the only ones who can afford to contribute thousands of dollars to a savings account. In fact, less than 1 percent of all people who might use medical savings accounts earn less than \$30,000 a year, even though these families account for nearly half of all American taxpayers.

Who loses? Everyone else who relies on standard insurance. In fact, if medical savings accounts are available, some businesses could make it impossible for many families to even afford adequate health insurance.

□ 2000

The cost for premiums of regular health insurance could increase by more than 60 percent. Our goal at all times should be to try to increase the amount of Americans that have health insurance and to try to make health insurance more affordable.

We will do exactly the opposite with these medical savings accounts. We are creating tax breaks for the wealthiest and the healthiest among us and we are making costs less affordable, and we are probably making it so that fewer people in the long run would have health insurance. It makes no sense.

The only thing I can say is that I have to hope that over the next few weeks, it was mentioned earlier this evening by the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DELAY] that we may go to conference on the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill later next week. The conference has been held up essentially because there has been an effort to appoint a lot of conferees on the part of the Republican leadership who would favor these tax breaks for the wealthiest and the healthiest among us.

What I hope is that that position will change over the next week, that we can appoint conferees, and that this conference will quickly accede to the Senate version of the bill which does not include these tax breaks for the wealthiest and healthiest among us. What we need is a clean Kennedy-Kassebaum bill. Why? Because it will provide for portability and it will provide coverage for those with preexisting conditions.

The whole point of this health care reform this year, and it was stated by President Clinton in his State of the Union address, is that we must get to those people who change a job, who

lose their insurance because they change jobs or become self-employed, and we must get health insurance for those people who have preexisting medical conditions. Let us deal with those problems now. Let us forget these other controversial provisions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MICA). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. ENGLISH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

WE NEED TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Ms. MCKINNEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I have tried to compile the reasons why the Republican majority will not allow us to vote on a minimum wage increase, and the first reason I came up with was, of course, stated by Majority Whip DELAY, who says that minimum wage families do not really exist. He says, "Emotional appeals about working families trying to get by on \$4.25 an hour are hard to resist. Fortunately such families do not really exist."

An honorary member of the Republican freshman class, Rush Limbaugh, says on the official poverty line, "14,400 for a family of 4? That's not so bad."

Now he said that in November 1993. Earlier he said, "I know families that make \$180,000 a year and they don't consider themselves rich. Why, it costs them \$20,000 a year to send their kids to school."

Unfortunately, the House majority leader, DICK ARMEY, has said that he will resist a minimum wage increase with every fiber in his being. He says that the minimum wage is a very destructive thing.

Limbaugh goes on to say, "All of these rich guys like the Kennedy family and Perot, pretending to live just like we do and pretending to understand our trials and tribulations and pretending to represent us, and they get away with this."

Well, in 1993 while Limbaugh was equating himself with the average American family, Limbaugh's 1993 income was estimated to be \$15 million. That is from Forbes, April 1994.

One of the freshmen who also does not know about middle-class living, real middle-class living, says, "300,000 to \$750,000 a year, that's middle class."

I think that is out of touch. And anyone who makes above \$750,000 a year, he says, "that's upper middle class." Now, this is a real person who is representing all of the American folks in this Congress.

But what about the people who really are working hard and making minimum wage and need a little bit of representation down here on the floor of